

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

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PART I.

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having in vain tried to intimidate the Apostles by threats, took counsel to slay them, but were withheld by the advice of Gamaliel.

In the meantime, certain Hellenistic Jews, provoked by the zeal of Stephen, one of the almoners or deacons chosen for the distribution of alms among the poor, stirred up the people against them. The Sanhedrim did not long resist the popular tumult, and Stephen died, the first martyr.

With this commenced a persecution which led to the dispersion of the disciples, and served to spread the Gospel far and wide, for we read in The Acts, "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere, preaching the Word." Driven from Jerusalem, they preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Damascus, Phœnecia, Cyprus and Antioch, though, at first, only to the Jews. In an extraordinary manner God made known to Peter, and through him to the whole Church, His will that the Gentiles also should become Christians, and, in an equally remarkable way, He called Paul to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

From this time forward, Christianity spread rapidly and from the account of Paul's travels in The Acts, as well as from fragments of ancient writings, we have reason to believe that the doctrine of Christ had not only reached every portion of the Roman Empire by the close of the first century, but that it had extended its influence into Parthia, India and Scythia.

The Christians were at first persecuted only by the Jews, for the Romans considered them a part of the Jewish nation, which enjoyed religious liberty by virtue of decrees of the Roman senate and of the Emperor, and did not molest them. When, however, the Jews began to make complaints against the Christians to the Roman authorities, it was seen that they stood apart, and being no longer under the shield that was extended over a national religion, their meetings were pronounced illegal, and they became exposed to the full force of the Roman law. How much they suffered varied according to the locality, the intolerance of the Roman officers, and the policy of the Emperors. In the year 64 A. D., Nero, to screen himself, accused the Christians of setting fire to the city of Rome. This was the signal for a severe persecution, which was confined chiefly to the city and its immediate neighborhood. Another persecution took place during the reign of Domitian, which extended over the whole empire and raged until the time of his death, but both failed utterly in their attempt to exterminate the Church, which continued to grow rapidly.

It is evident from the narrative given in the Acts that the first Christians, as long as the converts were chiefly among the Jewish nation, considered themselves as connected with the Jewish Church and participated in all its institutions. But it appears also that they united in private meetings and "in breaking of bread from house to

house," and, the Evangelist adds, "All that believed had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted to them all, as every man had need." The unbelieving Jews, however, calling them in derision Galileans and Nazarenes, drove them from their synagogues, and compelled them to form a regularly constituted society.

The first Christian society was established at Jerusalem, and that became the mother of all Christian Churches. Thither Peter went to render an account of his visit to the centurion at Cæsarea, and Paul to render an account of his labors among the Gentiles. There, also, the difficult question, whether Gentile converts were to be compelled to submit to all the laws of Moses, was brought and decided in the negative.

Naturally, the primitive Church was modeled after the Jewish synagogue, with similar offices and forms of service. These were changed in time, however, according to the circumstances of the Churches.

The Lord had left no special rule in regard to the government of His Church except that His followers should have but one Lord and Master, even Christ, and that all the members of His Church, as brethren and sisters, were to maintain a standing of perfect equality, therefore no difference in rank was attached to any office of the Church in the time of the Apostles. The ministry was not a dignity but a service, a function, a duty. In the way of necessary organization there were deacons to distribute alms and attend to such interests, and elders to guard the spiritual welfare of the members. Bishops began to be considered a higher order of the clergy during the second century, but during the first century the title was often used as the equivalent of elder, gradually becoming restricted to the chief elder in a congregation.

While the Apostles were living, or any who had been eye witnesses of the life of Jesus, and had heard His doctrines from His own lips, their lives and their hearts, filled as they were with the Holy Spirit, supplied every want of spiritual knowledge which Christians could desire. Four of their number wrote the story of Christ's life on earth, each recording the doctrines and the events which seemed to him most important. The Apostles travelled hither and thither, preaching and teaching, and, when unable to visit certain churches, they sent letters of instruction, encouragement and warning, applying the doctrines of Jesus to the needs of their people, and these letters were read to the Churches in the neighborhood, as well as to those to which they were written. So the Apostolic Church practically had the entire Scriptures, though the canon of the New Testament was not compiled until the second century, or later.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

100—313 A. D.

When the first century ended the Apostle John was still living, but imprisoned on the island of Patmos. Men had all sorts of beliefs, as they have now, for the canon of the New Testament had not yet been compiled, — hence, there was room for much tradition and many opinions. This caused the leaders of the Church to recognize the need for some standard by which all men could test their faith. During the second and third centuries the writings which had come down from apostolic days were carefully studied, those of uncertain authorship or doubtful inspiration were gradually set aside, and at last the five histories which we call the Gospels and the Book of Acts, and the Epistles and Revelation of our New Testament, were accepted, and have ever since been the foundation of the faith and practice of Christians.

During the second century the Church was disturbed by various sects of Ebionites and Gnostics. Since those who held these heresies considered themselves Christians, the orthodox party began to speak of themselves as the "Catholic," that is, the "universal" Christian Church, as distinguished from the unorthodox sects, and the name is still so used, though the term "Roman Catholic" came to have a more limited meaning in the next period of the Church.

In the third century, Paul, Bishop of Samosata, led another sect, called the Monarchians; and at the beginning of the fourth century came Arius, whose teachings were embraced by multitudes, bringing endless and bitter trouble to the Church. Arius was a presbyter in Alexandria, who propounded the doctrine that Christ was a created being, and so not equal with the Father until after the Ascension. A Church Council was called at Nicea, in 325, which decided that the Son was equal with the Father, the creation of the Son was denied, and His eternal Sonship affirmed. Arius and two friends were banished to Illyria, but the heresy long retained great importance. The chief opponent of Arius was Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who was, for half a century, the untiring and intrepid defender of the doctrine of the divinity of Christ.

But Athanasius was not the first to rise up against these various heresies. Among the names that stand out during the second century for fostering the true faith are Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch; Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna; Justin Martyr, and Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons,—all sealing their faith with their lives. Ignatius, some of whose writings still exist, was taken to Rome, where he perished as a martyr in the amphitheatre. Polycarp, a disciple of John the Apostle, was arrested, and when required to curse Christ answered: "Six and eighty years have I served Him, and He has done me

nothing but good ; and how could I curse Him, my Lord and Saviour !” Refusing to renounce the faith he was burned to death. Justin, whose writings present us with very valuable information concerning the Church of his time, was put to death at Rome,—tradition says he was scourged and beheaded. Irenæus studied under Polycarp, and his treatise, “Against Heresies,” is one of the principal Christian writings of the century. He died a martyr at Lyons. Following these we find an able defender of the cause of Christianity in Tertullian of Carthage, a celebrated writer, and in Clement, one of the most noted founders of the school of theology at Alexandria.

Among the leaders in the third century we may mention Origen and Cyprian. Origen stands out as the greatest luminary of his age, and his influence as an instructor of the clergy as well as an author was very extensive. He met the fate of his master, Ignatius, and thousands of others, in a martyr’s death. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, took part in the celebrated dispute concerning the validity of baptism conferred by heretics. He wrote mainly on Church Government and discipline, and he also suffered martyrdom.

From this it will appear how frequent were the persecutions during those years. In the second century we find two great persecutions, while during the third century the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth persecutions of Christians took place under Roman authority. The catacombs of Rome belong to this period, being used as places of burial by the Christians, who did not wish to cremate their dead as did the Romans. They also served as meeting-places for the Christians during the worst persecutions, though at other times the homes of members were used for gatherings. Public churches began to be built during the third century, and were modeled after the Roman basilica, which was a court house and exchange.

During these troubled years the Bishops came to have new responsibilities and greater influence. Originally the Bishops, of whom the Apostle James was the first, were expected to be overseers and shepherds, but now various new powers were given to them. This enabled them to guard their people against heresies, and aid them in many ways, but also opened the door for that abuse of power which later became so serious a menace to the Church.

Eusebius, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine belong to the next period of Church history, but we may mention them here because they were among the most famous of the Church Fathers. Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, sometimes called “the Father of Church History,” was a celebrated theologian and historian. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, was a champion of the Catholics against the Arians and pagans, and powerful enough to force the Emperor Theodosius to do penance for ordering a massacre. John,

patriarch of Constantinople, was called Chrysostom, "the golden-mouthed," on account of his eloquence. Jerome is best known by his Latin version of the Bible, called the Vulgate, which is still used by the Roman Catholics. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, was a teacher, preacher, and writer of incessant activity, and in distinction and in wide-spread and lasting influence he was the foremost of the Latin Church Fathers.

313 is the date of Constantine the Great, who is said to have seen in the sky a flaming cross, with the inscription, "By this conquer." He won the battle, became a Christian, and is called the first Christian emperor. One of his first acts was to issue an edict of religious toleration, which gave the Christian Church legal recognition, and freed them from the terrible persecutions which they had so long endured.

THE ROMAN AND THE GREEK CHURCHES,

313—800 A. D.

The conversion of Constantine to the Christian faith, marked the beginning of an epoch. The entire Roman empire, which before had been the champion of paganism and the persecutor of Christianity, now became its protector and patron. Constantine was born in the year 274. His mother was a Christian, but the time or circumstances of her conversion are not known. She had instructed him in the Christian tenets, and when he had his famous vision of the cross in the sky, he was convinced and set about paying his allegiance to this new faith. Whether this was done as a political scheme is not clear, but he did make faith in the Christians' God the standard throughout the empire. He did not persecute the pagans however, but instituted a very tolerant policy over against the same. That he himself was not fully weaned from faith in the pagan gods is claimed by some, and it may be true to a certain extent, but, in the main, he upheld and spread the principles of Christianity.

At the time of his death, however, his son, Constantius, came into possession of the Roman empire. His policy was just opposite from the tolerant policy of his father. He made all who would not accept Christianity, in the eastern part of the empire, leave the realm or suffer death, and thus the new faith became more firmly established in the East, but it lost its hold on the people, who now hated it because of Constantius' persecutions. In the West, however, he did not adopt as bold an attitude, and was more tolerant. Many of the old Roman families who held to the pagan faith were powerful

and influential, and he could not risk the sacrifice of their friendship, and so allowed them freedom of belief. By his tolerant policy in the Western part of his empire, pagan superstitions became mixed with the new faith, and so corrupted it that it was not recognized in the East as pure. Naturally, this pagan tendency caused the Church life to degenerate to a great extent, and this reached its climax under the emperor Julian, called the Apostate, the cousin of Constantius, who succeeded to the empire. His eager mind, naturally imaginative, made him a suitable leader for this degenerate type of Christianity. He secretly embraced the pagan faith, and as supreme pontiff personally conducted ceremonies and sacrifices. He tolerated Christianity, but in order to bring it into disrepute he encouraged all other religions and all sectarian controversies. It seemed that the Christian faith in the Roman empire was doomed, but after Julian's death, and the tolerant policy of the next emperor, it again became dominant in the empire, and from this time the pagan religion seemed to lose its hold, and slowly weakened before the more powerful Christian faith.

A new danger now faced the Roman emperors. The West Goths, on their borders, had adopted Christianity, through the preaching of Ulphilas, who had gone into their country as a missionary from the East. He became a Bishop, and had great success as a leader among the West Goths. He desired to penetrate with his preaching into the country of the East Goths, but they would not receive him. His people were persecuted by the East Goths and he obtained permission to bring a party of his West Goths across the Danube for protection, and thus they came into the limits of the Roman empire. They became greatly incensed at the avarice and intolerance of some of the Roman nobles, and Valens, Emperor of the East, was killed. The empire seemed to be tottering, and only by the skill of Theodosius, hastily made Regent of the East, was it kept from ruin. He checked the progress of the Goths, and again restored the Roman empire. He favored the Nicean doctrine of the Trinity, and tried by severe measures to suppress Arianism, and a General Council was called in 381, to meet in Constantinople, which reaffirmed the Nicean doctrine.

Theodosius, now Emperor, tried by harsh and inhuman laws to crush out the remnants of paganism, but never fully succeeded. During this time a new leader had sprung up among the West Goths in Alaric, who, in 410, captured and sacked Rome and dealt the death blow to Paganism in the Roman empire. The ancient shrines and temples were ordered pillaged and burned, and the patrician families, who were its staunchest supporters, were either destroyed or scattered.

While the Western part of the Roman empire was thus passing through a stormy time, and the pure Christian belief suffered by

being mixed with paganism, the Eastern portion, with Constantinople as a center, was being slowly and firmly converted to Christianity. It seemed to overpower without much effort the old beliefs, and was soon firmly established as a better faith, and thus a purer type of Christianity sprang up at once in the Eastern part, free from corruption by pagan superstition and ancient philosophy.

Ever since the day when Constantine established his capital at Constantinople, there had been more or less division between the Eastern and Western portions of the empire. Sometimes there were two or more Emperors, nominally ruling conjointly, sometimes one man would get all the power into his hands and rule alone, but always there was an East and a West. In 395 there was a definite and final separation into two empires, though the Church for a time continued as one.

About the end of the fifth century, the Franks, another Germanic tribe, poured down upon Southern Europe, and overcame the earlier bands who had seized Gaul and Italy. Their king, Clovis, had vowed to become a Christian if he won a certain battle, and being the victor he and three thousand of his warriors were baptised.

While these political disruptions and changes were taking place the Church was gradually being built into a strong organization. The Bishops of the larger towns soon became prominent, and considered above the smaller ones, and the two dioceses of Rome and Constantinople loomed up above all, one in the East and one in the West of the empire. The Church Councils gave to these two cities and their respective bishops the highest rank. Soon, however, Rome took to itself the prerogative of being called the first or highest bishopric, and the bishop took the name of "pope." Siricius, Bishop of Rome from 384 to 398, so styled himself, but for many years the title was applied to any bishop, gradually becoming restricted to the more prominent. Leo I, who was pope of Rome 440 to 461, was a man of strong will and great courage. He saved Rome from Attila and the Huns in 452, and was foremost in defense of the city when the weak Emperor Honorius was in hiding. He also considered himself the spiritual leader of the Roman empire, and so proclaimed himself to the world. The Council of Chalcedon said the first rank rightly belonged to the Bishop of Rome, as it was the ancient capital of the empire. Leo, however, spurned this idea, and claimed the prerogative because he was the successor of Peter, the chief of the Apostles, vicar of Christ, and the first Bishop of Rome. He skillfully used the powerful political position of Rome, and interwove it with the churchly consideration. This started the breach between the Eastern and Western Churches, which was to end in their final separation. One of the chief reasons of this widening breach between the East and the West was the difference in temperament of the Greek and Latin. The Greek in the East had

discussions concerning the Trinity and person of Christ, which suited the speculative mind of the Greek, while in the West the Latin mind was more interested in such practical subjects as sin and the recovery of man by divine grace. Thus a natural tendency was drawing them apart. The greatest controversy which harrassed the Church at that time was the so-called Arian controversy relating to the divinity of Christ. Begun by Arius in the third century the controversy continued, until at the Council of Toledo in Spain in 589 A. D. the "filioque" was inserted into the Creed, by which it was made to affirm that the Spirit proceeded from the Father "and the Son" instead of only from the Father as it formerly stood. This addition was not acceptable to the Eastern Church, and caused the final separation between Greek in the East and Latin in the West, though opportunity had long been sought for separation. Thus, the Greek Church has remained to this day, though nominally recognizing the Pope as head it does not obey his mandates implicitly, and has its own patriarchs and metropolitans. They differ from the Roman Church in a number of smaller details, but this in the main is their point of difference.

The Greek Church is now the national Church of Russia, and of Greece, with a small following elsewhere. The Roman Church, more generally known as the Roman Catholic Church, is widely spread, and has played an important part in the political as well as in the religious history of the world.

During the years from 589 to 800 the Roman Church grew greatly in numbers and political influence. Missionaries went to England, to Germany, and to Hungary, where they met with much opposition but ultimate success. On the other hand, the rise of the Mohammedan religion, 622 A. D., its rapid growth, and armed advance into Europe, threatened the Church and all the western states with extermination, from which they were saved by the Franks, under Charles Martel.

But Christianity had, unhappily, parted with its ancient purity and simplicity. The kingdom of God had become identified with the visible Church, through whose mediation, it was thought, salvation alone was possible, and obedience to whose laws was often the sum of the requirements laid on converts. The inner, living power of the Gospel was still in being, but hidden under much formalism. Images and relics came to be greatly venerated, and the sale of "indulgences" commenced. The power of the Pope at Rome gained new strength, and became a factor in all important political changes in western Europe; and when, on Dec. 25, 800, at St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, the Pope crowned the Frankish king, Charlemagne, Emperor of the "Holy Roman Empire," it typified the close relation in which Church and State stood and were to stand for many a century.

The Church in Bohemia, 800=1457 A. D.

CHRISTIANITY IN BOHEMIA, 800—1394 A. D.

If Rome was the scene of the first great struggles of Christianity, when a handful of persecuted Christians became a powerful organization, and the despised "sect" grew into the honored Church to which kings and emperors paid due homage; if Rome witnessed the development of Christianity into a great world power, Bohemia was the battle-field in the second and equally vital campaign, when the contest was between a religion overburdened with rites and ceremonies, and a simple faith,—between spiritual ignorance and a Bible which all might read. A lust for power had come upon the leaders, Bible knowledge was withheld from the people that they might be more easily led, and imposing ritual had taken the place of intelligent worship. It was against this false superstructure that the attack in Bohemia was made, that "true religion and undefiled" might be saved to the world.

The little kingdom of Bohemia lies in the north-western corner of the Austrian empire. It is quite small, not half the size of North Carolina, but very fertile, and the natural rampart formed by the mountain chains on all four sides gave to its people in earlier years a sense of independence which enhanced their natural love of freedom.

The beginnings of Bohemian history are shrouded in uncertainty. Attila and his Huns laid waste the country on their retreat from Rome, and the inhabitants who escaped with their lives fell an easy prey to the Czechs, a band of Slavonians, who about that time came into the country, tradition says from the Carpathian Mountains. During the next centuries these Czechs lived quietly, cultivating the soil, and selling grain and horses to the neighboring nations. Their religion somewhat resembled the Grecian mythology, with numerous gods and goddesses, nymphs and demons.

South-east of Bohemia lies the still smaller province of Moravia, whose history has always been linked with that of Bohemia, and through Moravia Christianity made its first entrance into that region. In 836 Prince Mojmir of Moravia learned of it from the Franks, accepted it, and built three churches; in 845 fourteen Bohemian

noblemen were baptised while on a visit to the Germans ; but neither incident affected the people as a whole.

In 846 Rastislaw become Duke of Bohemia and Moravia. He wanted to shake off the power of the Franks, so when he desired Christian teachers for his people he sent, not to the Roman but to the Greek branch of the Church.

In answer to his appeal Cyrill and Methodius came to Moravia in 863, and with them the history of Christianity in Bohemia and Moravia really begins. Cyrill and Methodius were brothers, earnest and devout men, who had already labored successfully in other fields, winning to the side of Christianity nations that had long been its wild and formidable foes, and they brought to their new work methods which were sure to win the hearts of the people. They finished a Slavonian translation of the Bible, which Cyrill had already begun ; they read the Bible to the people, and preached in their own language ; they trained young Czechs as priests ; they built up a national Church, in which the Czechs felt at home.

But the Roman Church heard of their success, and determined to claim the work on the ground that the first introduction of Christianity into the country had come through its members. Cyrill and Methodius were summoned to Rome, but Pope Nicholas died before they arrived. His successor, Adrian II, thought it would be to his advantage to have Bohemia and Moravia comprise a diocese independent of both the German Bishops and the Greek Patriarch, and directly tributary to him, so he received the missionaries very graciously, approved of all they had done, and offered to make them Bishops. Cyrill, whose health was failing, declined the honor, and died a few weeks later, but Methodius promised him obedience, and was consecrated Archbishop of Pannonia, which was the ancient name of that diocese. He returned to Moravia, and under his guidance the good work spread into Bohemia, and the first Christian church was built near Prague.

The jealousy of the German bishops then became more intense, and they complained at Rome until Methodius was again called thither, and while he triumphantly vindicated his course the Pope ordered that the Gospels must be publicly read first in Latin and then in Slavonian, and a German suffragan, or assistant bishop, was appointed. From this small beginning the power of the Roman Church increased until Bohemia and Moravia were entirely in their hands.

The Czechish language and the Greek ritual fell into disuse, and the native priests were driven out, in spite of the pleas and demands of the common people. The nobility, and such of the inhabitants as traded with Germany, favored the Roman Church ; the Latin language, the Roman ritual and doctrines were introduced, and a German was made their bishop. Now and then a Bohemian

ruler would re-awaken the national spirit, and a new attempt would be made to regain their Bible, and the Slavonian Church, but it was in vain, and religious liberty slumbered for two centuries and a half.

About the middle of the fourteenth century, signs began to appear that the medieval Church-system was breaking up. It had bound the human mind in its icy fetters for ages, but it could not bind the Spirit whom God had sent. Under His divine influences a reaction set in, and slowly gained strength until it burst forth as an overwhelming flood. Men began to think for themselves, not simply as the Church commanded, and here and there some one came to the opinion that the Bible should be the standard of belief, and not doctrines which the Church had created. But so strong was the hold of ignorance and error that people learned slowly.

In 1347 Charles (later known as Charles IV, Emperor of Germany,) became King of Bohemia, and under his guidance it entered a golden age of material prosperity. He took Bohemia away from the archbishopric of Mayence, and created an archbishopric of Prague; he organized the Slavonian Monastery of Emmaus, and founded the University of Prague. He meant to make Bohemia great, and to advance the cause of the Roman Church, but the result was not what he expected. There was a re-awakening of the Christian life of Bohemia under the first archbishop of Prague, a man of apostolic ways. The Slavonian Ritual, although in a Romish form, and the Czech language, were used in the Monastery at Emmaus; and the renewed spirit of national life, with its traditions of true and free religion, became a power in the University, which soon grew to be one of the greatest in Europe, and which sent forth John Huss, one of the epoch-makers of history.

Three forerunners prepared the way for his coming, Conrad of Waldhausen, Milic of Kremsier, and Matthias von Janow. Conrad was a distinguished preacher, who settled in Bohemia about 1360. He had been on a pilgrimage to Rome some years before, and was deeply impressed by the multitudes who swarmed into the city, paid the price of absolution without one thought of repentance, and immediately fell into fresh sin. After that, with a boldness that came from God, he exposed the vices of the times, and called sinners to repentance. He met with wonderful success in Bohemia, and in spite of fierce opposition from the priests he continued to teach the necessity of a living Christianity, of a renewal of the heart, and of saving faith in Christ.

Milic laid aside wealth and power in Church and State in order to serve the Lord in poverty and lowliness. He was an eloquent speaker, and though of a mystical turn of mind, he stirred the spirit of the people to its depths with his solemn protest against the vices of the age, his earnest call for a General Council that the Church

might be reformed, and his plea for the preaching of the pure Gospel that the spiritual kingdom of Christ might spread.

Matthias, a pupil of Milic, was a writer, not a preacher. His position was bold and evangelical, and the truths which he set forth were as a trumpet blast that announced the coming reformer. He died in 1394, one year after John Huss took his first degree at the University of Prague.

HUSS AND THE HUSSITES, 1394—1457.

John Huss was born at Husinec, Bohemia ; the day and year of his birth are uncertain, but thought to be July 6, 1369.

His parents were peasants, though in good circumstances. Of his early life nothing is known. He studied at the University of Prague, where he soon attracted attention by his great scholarship. He was graduated from this place in 1396, receiving the Master's degree. He was appointed University lecturer two years later, and held this chair for some time, lecturing on the doctrines and practices of the Romish Church.

In 1401 he was elected Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, and here again demonstrated his great depth of learning and breadth of scholarship. For the next two years he labored here, and was then made rector of the University, which position he likewise filled in an able manner.

He was also, in the year 1402, ordained to the priesthood, and in addition to his professorship preached in the Bethlehem Chapel at Prague.

He read some of the writings of Wyclif, and became inspired in such a measure that he sought to spread the doctrines among the Bohemians.

Being the preacher of the Bethlehem Chapel, University professor, and private confessor to the queen, his utterances carried great weight with them.

He attacked first of all the Court, with its vices, and condemned them in strong terms. Then he took the priests to task for their loose manner of living, and especially for the sale of indulgences.

In 1403 he was forbidden by the authorities of the University to discuss these questions in the lecture room or in the pulpit. In 1410 the Pope, John XXIII, issued a bull against the teachings of Wyclif as heretical, and ordered them burned, and as Huss had been denouncing the same things as Wyclif, he was ordered to cease from speaking against the Church. He and his followers were placed under the ban of the Church and ordered to appear before the next General Council.

In 1412 Pope John XXIII proclaimed a crusade against the King of Naples, and promised indulgence to all who volunteered for service. Huss now took up the matter of indulgences, and denounced the practice as wrong, which caused a breach between himself and the Church of Rome.

In 1412 a Papal interdict was issued against him. He appealed to the Council and to Christ, and feeling himself no longer safe in Prague withdrew to the castle of a friendly nobleman.

In Nov., 1414, in obedience to a summons from the Pope, under the protection of the King of Bohemia and with a promised safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund, he went to the Council, convened at Constance.

He may have fancied that he would at that time have an opportunity to defend his views in open debate, but in this he was mistaken, and soon learned that he was to be tried as a heretic. He was kept imprisoned a long time, was treated with great cruelty, and not formally accused until June 5th, 1415.

On June 7th thirty-nine charges were made against him, some of which he acknowledged as based upon his teachings, while others grossly misrepresented them, and upon being asked to recant his teachings he refused to do so unless they could be proven wrong.

The formal trial and execution of Huss took place about a month later, and the events of that day have been thus described :

“On Saturday, July 6, 1415, there was great excitement in the city of Constance,—the largest Council that had ever been held in this city was in session. From all parts of the Western world distinguished men had come. Pope John XXIII was there ; Emperor Sigismund was there ; there were a thousand Bishops, over two thousand Doctors and Masters—about two thousand Counts, with Barons and Knights, Dukes, Princes, Ambassadors — in all over 50,000 strangers. And now, after months of discussion, the Council assembled in the cathedral, to settle once for all what should be done with John Huss.” “But why was John Huss there? And what had he done to offend the Pope and Emperor? For the last twelve months John Huss had been the leading figure in Bohemia. He had raised his voice against the vices of the people,—against priest, clergy, archbishop ! He had gone further still in declaring that Christ was the only true head of the Church, and that the Pope was not to be obeyed unless he taught that the Bible and not the Church was the true standard of faith ; that the Pope had not the keys of heaven ; that man could be forgiven by God *only*, through faith and repentance ; that the supposed miracles worked by the saints were a fraud ; that the priests who duped the people by the sale of indulgences were servants not of Christ but of the Devil.” Indulgences had become a mammoth traffic—any one could procure a pardon for sin and a safe entrance into the eternal world. Any one received

a pardon from sin who would fight for the causes of the Roman Catholic Church ; the buying of a bone, or a lock of hair, or a piece of garment, a finger or toe nail of some saint, obtained promised pardon for sins, past and future, and large sums were paid to the priests, who travelled the length and breadth of the land, robbing the poor and ignorant, the grieved and troubled, even selling at great prices pardons for friends who had already departed. "All this is in vain," said Huss, " God alone can forgive sins, through Christ."

" And now John Huss stood before the Council. His face was pale, his limbs were weak and trembling from many months in the dungeons. Short and sharp was the public trial, for the trial was but a sham. He was condemned to death as a heretic ; his priestly robes were taken from him ; a fool's cap a yard high, with pictures of Devils painted on all sides, was placed upon the hero's head ; in this seeming disgrace he was led to a meadow, outside the city. He was bound to a stake with seven moist thongs and a chain, and fagots of dry wood were piled about him to the chin.

" As the flames arose and the wood crackled, he sang, 'Christ, thou Son of the living God, have mercy upon me !' "

Thus the great reformer passed, as by a chariot of fire, into the presence of the Master, who had died for him, and who has said : " To him that endureth to the end will I give a crown of life." His ashes were gathered and, together with the ground on which the stake had stood, were thrown into the Rhine.

Nearly a year later, May 30th, 1416, Jerome of Prague suffered martyrdom on the same spot. He was the most intimate friend and active helper of John Huss, a highly gifted man, an acute reasoner and eloquent speaker, but of a restless disposition and fiery temper. He came to Constance to help Huss, but was advised by friends that it was of no use, and that he must return to Bohemia as quickly as possible. This he attempted to do, but was arrested and imprisoned, suffering much in mind and body, but dying with the same fortitude which Huss displayed.

The day Huss suffered death at the stake was a sad day for Bohemia. His followers were insulted by their leader's death, it angered them, it grieved them, they felt cut to the heart. A Hussite League was formed, whose members pledged themselves to act in unison, to allow free preaching of the Gospel on their estates, etc. A Catholic League was formed in opposition, but for four years nothing of moment took place.

Then the Hussite Wars began, and for sixteen years Bohemia, single-handed, defied all Europe. Famine stalked through the villages, blood-red war defiled the valleys, party after party rose and fell, houses were burnt, families murdered, and death haunted the land.

Sigismund, now also King of Bohemia, was determined to crush what he called heresy in that province, and persuaded the Pope to begin a crusade against the Hussites, who found their greatest leader in John Ziska, the blind leader of the Taborite party. He formed the rough Bohemian peasantry into a disciplined army, armed them with lances, spears, iron-pointed flails, clubs and slings. He led his men to battle to the sound of psalms and hymns, and won victory after victory, and never lost a battle. After his death in 1424 Procop the Great took his place as leader, and gained fresh victories, until Europe was forced to admit that Bohemia could not be conquered by force of arms.

Unfortunately, however, the Hussites had from the first been divided amongst themselves, and stood united only when great danger threatened them from without. The two chief parties were the Utraquists, or Calixtines, and the Taborites. The name of the former denotes the chief point of their contention (*sub utraque*—under both kinds, *calix*—a cup,) which was that the laity should receive both the bread and the wine in the Lord's Supper, whereas the Catholics had come to permit only the clergy to take the cup. The Utraquists were the conservative and aristocratic party, who hoped for reunion with Rome, when the Romish Church had been purified. The Taborites, so called from their meeting place, Mount Tabor, were progressive and democratic. They accepted the Bible as the only source of faith and rule of practice, and they went far beyond the Utraquists in antipathy to the Church of Rome. The scriptural character of their system was, however, marred by extreme views and, at times, by fanaticism. The great Ziska belonged to the Taborites, and after his death his immediate followers assumed the name of Orphans, and became a third faction, occupying a middle position between the other two.

In 1433 a Council of the Romish Church met at Basle, and the Hussites were invited to send delegates. They did so, and after much debate an agreement was reached whereby concessions were secured for Bohemia which satisfied the Utraquists. But the Taborites and Orphans were not content, and in 1434 the battle of Lipan was fought, the Taborites were utterly defeated, and the Utraquist Church became the National Church of Bohemia, with John of Rokycana at its head.

Rokycana was a very able man, but vain, greedy of popularity, and ambitious, desiring above all else to become the spiritual ruler of Bohemia. At first he cherished thoughts of reconciliation with the Romanists, but when he realized that the Pope would not stand his friend he began to preach most bitterly against him, and sought to make the Utraquists an independent national Church. But the Utraquist Church itself was in a bad way, and something more was needed before true religion was restored to Bohemia.

Scattered throughout Bohemia and Moravia were men who were quietly trying to live as Huss had taught them, not as the Hussites had fought, and they were now to be brought into a union which would grow into the Church of the Unitas Fratrum, "The Unity of Brethren." Remembering the doctrines of Huss, stirred by the strong sermons of Rokycana, some of them begged the eloquent preacher to tell them what they must do in order to be accepted of God. He referred them to Peter of Chelcic, next to Huss, the greatest Bohemian writer of the century. Little is known of his personal history, but his influence was great. In his writings he took an independent position, disagreeing with both Utraquists and Taborites where he thought them wrong. Strong in his opinions, as to doctrine, he looked upon Christianity as a life, rather than a creed, and taught that to love God above all and one's neighbor as one's self is the supreme law. He led Gregory, and the others who came with him, to see that it was not enough to long and pray for a reformation, but that for such a cause they must work, venture, suffer. His intercourse with these seekers after light continued for several years, and he died about the time the Unitas Fratrum was begun.

Filled with enthusiasm Gregory and his friends begged Rokycana to lead a reformation, and when he refused they began to hold services here and there, where the Scriptures were read and explained. What they most needed was a rallying place, and such a place God showed them, and there the Unitas Fratrum was founded.

The Unitas Fratrum, 1457--1722 A. D.

RISE OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM, 1457—1473.

The years intervening between 1457 and 1467 were peculiarly of a formative nature in the Unitas Fratrum. The life and work of John Huss were over. His followers had made a noble fight for the cause of their leader, and many were still ready to do their best for the establishment of a pure Bible faith. The Hussite Wars had devastated the land; sufferings untold of men, women and children had filled it with horror.

Among those that had arisen during this period was one Peter, called Peter of Chelcic, who did not believe in the sword and slaughter, but used his pen against the Roman Catholic Church and its priesthood. His pamphlets, which, with the Bible, became the literature of the time, were read by many with delight; these readers were called brethren of Chelcic, and they sprang up in different parts of Bohemia, so that gradually and quietly were laid the foundation ideas of what afterward became the Church of the Unitas Fratrum.

John Rokycana was an eloquent preacher, but he proved to be anything but what was needed for a reformer. His chief trouble was that he could not bear to be on the unpopular side. Convinced, he said he was "that the Brethren were right, but where was the profit?" When asked to become leader of the men who had been aroused partly by his own preaching, he "feared the time was not ripe for such a movement," so they forsook his standard, and circled around one Gregory, later known as "Gregory the Patriarch," who never failed them.

Gregory was a nephew of Rokycana, but a wholly different sort of man,—a man of strict morals and deep piety, ready to undertake and endure all things for God's honor, but humble, without ambition, seeking not his own. At the time when he became prominent he was about fifty years of age. About him gathered those who wished to see the establishment of a pure Church, and those who had studied the pamphlets of Peter Chelcic. From the midst of the Catholic Church, from all ranks of society they came, in no

small companies, to join this godly leader, with this question in their faces and on their lips, "Where shall we abide? Not always can we wander, not always can we hide."

Rokycana advised that they settle in different parishes, where the priests were in sympathy with them, but Gregory realized that they needed to be drawn more closely together, not scattered, and at last asked Rokycana to secure permission for them to settle in the Barony of Senftenberg, which belonged to George Podiebrad, then Regent of Bohemia. Rokycana was glad to be rid of his troublesome followers, Podiebrad thought the settlement would benefit his estate, so permission was given them to locate in the little village of Kunwald, near the castle of Lititz, and Rokycana saw them leave the section around Prague with great joy, and even gave help in their removal.

For four years they enjoyed a home life,—built cottages, cultivated their fields, opened workshops, and lived in peace. In Michael Bradacius, Priest of Senftenberg, they found a friend willing to serve them as minister or priest, and he and Gregory were put at the head of affairs, and certain principles were drawn up to regulate their doctrine and practice. They did not yet think of establishing a new Church, but only meant to have an association which should help them to live true Christian lives.

Their society, the *Unitas Fratrum*, or "Unity of Brethren," was organized in 1457, tradition says on March 1st, and in the same or the following year twenty-eight Elders were appointed as spiritual guides of the people. Rokycana looked upon them with favor, and around them gathered rich and poor from all parts of Bohemia, from the mountains, from Moravia, from the Waldensian settlements; there were priests from the Roman and Utraquist Churches, noblemen, students, tradesmen, and artisans of every type and rank. Naturally, in so large a company there were differing opinions on certain points, notably the Lord's Supper, but a Synod was called which adopted practically the view taught by Peter of Chelcic, which is still accepted by the members of the *Unitas Fratrum*. They also resolved to regulate their Christian life by the Biblical standard. Bradacius also began to simplify public worship, and so the first step was taken toward a Protestant ritual.

Meanwhile George Podiebrad had become King of Bohemia, and had begun to hope that he might also reach the position of Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Just when he most wished to conciliate the Pope complaints were made against the Brethren at Kunwald, on the ground that they had changed the ceremonies usual at the Lord's Supper, etc., and he indignantly ordered that all his subjects must join the Roman Catholic or the Utraquist Church or leave the country, and that "heresy" must be driven out from the University of Prague and elsewhere.

About this time Gregory went to Prague to visit Brethren there. The King ordered their arrest, but a friendly magistrate gave them warning of what was coming that they might escape. Some went, but several boastful students declined to flee, and Gregory thought it his duty to stay with them. Soon the magistrate appeared, with the salutation : "All who wish to live in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution," and led them to prison. The students, after tasting one torture on the rack, feared a second, and recanted, but Gregory remained steadfast, and was wrenched so terribly that he fell as dead from the rack. But God was with him, and gave him a beautiful dream or vision, in which he beheld three faces, of which we will hear later.

Gregory's release was secured through Rokycana, and the King's edict created such a stir among the Bohemians that he revoked it, but issued a new one directed especially against the Brethren, and ordering that any priests who conducted Communion after their fashion should immediately be put to death without trial. Gregory was again put into prison, deep down in a dungeon, starving, cold, old, and without any bodily comforts. Bradacius was cast into a dungeon in the Castle of Lititz, and many others were cruelly tortured or oppressed. A few denied their faith, but most of them were inspired with courage and determination. The happy homes and little churches for Christian worship were broken up, and the Brethren fled to the woods and mountains to live the lives of the hunted deer. They cooked their meals by night, and while the enemy slept they read their Bibles around their watch fires, with the stately pines, the kindly moon, and the quiet stars keeping vigils with them and telling no tales. From this we may, perhaps, in a small measure, catch the meaning of the words of Jesus Christ : "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," and "the servant is not greater than his Master." "Pit-men" they were often called in derision, yet daily they increased in numbers, and as their fires shone out in the dark forest, so their pure lives shone out among these darkened people.

Attracted by the steadfastness they had shown, there came both priests and laymen asking to be admitted to their communion, among the latter noblemen, who invited the Brethren to settle on their estates. Gradually the persecution died out, and the imprisoned members were released, but the conviction spread that a more complete organization must be given to the Church, and that it must be more absolutely grounded, in doctrine and practice, on the Holy Scriptures. A synod was called at Reichenau, in 1464, which drew up a series of statutes,—the oldest document of the *Unitas Fratrum* now extant.

In 1467, just ten years after the beginning of the *Unitas Fratrum*

by the Kunwald assembly, the Brethren met in a tanner's cottage at Lhota. Friendly priests of the Utraquist Church had advised them to establish their own ministry, and they felt that it would be impossible to count on a sufficient number of priests who might leave the Utraquist Church to join them, so they met at Lhota with these questions burning in their hearts: "Is it God's will that we separate entirely from the Papacy and hence from its priesthood? Is it God's will that we shall institute, according to the model of the primitive Church, a ministerial order of our own?" With earnest prayer the lot was cast, and both questions were decided affirmatively. The Synod therefore took the decisive step. About sixty delegates were present, with Gregory the Patriarch in their midst. After earnest prayer, nine men were elected by ballot from among this number,—three of these nine were to be chosen by lot for pastors of the *Unitas Fratrum*, if the Lord so willed. There were only nine men, but there were twelve slips, nine blank, three with the Bohemian word "jest" (meaning "is") thereon. These twelve slips were put into a vase,—then came the solemn moment. Earnest prayer was offered, and then a boy drew out one slip and another until the nine men each stood with a slip. Oh, what would it say? Would there be nine blanks, or would they be accepted? Yes, three were accepted; Matthias, Thomas, and Elias, each held a slip with "jest" upon it, and God had again assured them of acceptance as a Church. Their hearts were filled with thankfulness beyond expression; the chains of Rome forever snapped. The three men that held the slips with "jest" on them Gregory immediately recognized as bearing the faces he had seen in his wonderful vision while on the rack.

The Synod then took up the subject of their ordination, as a result of which two separate and distinct steps were taken. First, the three candidates were ordained by an aged Waldensian priest among them, because "the New Testament makes no distinction between bishops and priests; in the time of the Apostles priests administered the rite of ordination, and the Brethren desire to follow the example of the Apostolic Church in all things." In the second place the episcopacy was obtained for them. "A distinction, it was said, was made at an early day, immediately after the time of the Apostles, between bishops and priests; to the former was committed the exclusive power to ordain. These considerations induced the Synod to resolve upon the introduction of the episcopal office, through which the congregations would be more closely united among themselves and better able to meet inimical proceedings, indignities, and evil speaking from without."

Michael Bradacius and two other priests were therefore sent to a colony of Waldenses, living in Moravia, where Stephen and another bishop, whose name is not known, consecrated them bishops.

These Waldenses claimed to be of very ancient origin, and although there is some uncertainty whether the episcopate they possessed in 1467 came from the Roman or from the Greek Church, there is no doubt that Stephen had a valid episcopate, and that he gave it to the *Unitas Fratrum*, and even the bitterest enemies of the *Unitas Fratrum* never questioned it, nor attempted to attack the ordination of their ministry.

On their return to Bohemia, Bradacius and the other two bishops re-ordained Matthias, Thomas, and Elias ; and then, with the approval of the lot, Matthias was consecrated bishop, and the independent ministry of the *Unitas Fratrum* was fully established.

When Rokycana heard of this he was very angry, and immediately started another persecution. The Waldenses were dispersed ; Bishop Stephen was captured and burned at the stake. The Brethren suffered greatly ; many were driven from their homes, racked or imprisoned. In Moravia Jacob Hulava was burned alive in the presence of his family. The numerous chapels which the Brethren had built were destroyed, and they were forced to meet secretly in the forests. But the leaders remained firm, the more wealthy members aided the poorer, and, in 1471, the persecution ceased, with the death of Rokycana and Podiebrad.

Two years later, Sept. 13th, 1473, Gregory the Patriarch died, leaving the Church which he had helped to found with an ever-increasing membership and an ever-widening influence.

THE UNITAS FRATRUM UNDER LUKE OF PRAGUE, 1473---1528.

With the death of Gregory the Patriarch, who had practically founded the Brethren's Church and completed its organization, there began a new period of its history. Gregory, with his stern devotion to the strict ideas of Peter of Chelcic, had ruled with an iron hand and had been an autocrat without any to dispute his authority, but soon a new and more liberal policy began to assert itself. The Church was strong in members. Over an area of 100 square miles around Kunwald its followers lay scattered. It was no longer a despised sect, but an honored Church. Aldermen and rich citizens, professors, landlords and knights represented it in the land and among the people. It could no longer keep aloof from the State, but must take its place and do its part in the world. For this purpose it needed to forget rather than remember the last words of Gregory the Patriarch : " Ah, Matthias, beware of the

educated Brethren." Strong, well-equipped, sagacious leaders were demanded by the crisis that had arrived in its history.

To inaugurate this newer and broader policy of the Church two men were raised up at this time. One, known as Luke of Prague, and born in 1460, was a graduate of the university of that name, and was a deeply-read theological scholar. He realized the demands of the hour and had the courage and faith to take the tide at the flood. Associated with him, and almost equally prominent in its policy was Procop of Neuhaws, also a university graduate and a representative of the advanced and educated element in the Church. These two led the movement against the bigotry and narrowness of sectarianism which was threatening, and struck the keynote for a broader policy. First and foremost it was settled that the writings of Peter and Gregory should no longer be authoritative as teachers of the Church. "We content ourselves," ran their declaration, "with those sacred books which have been accepted from of old by all Christians, and are found in the Bible."

Henceforth men of rank could join the Church without laying down their rank; oaths might be taken; profits in business might be made, and state offices might be filled. Thus the Church emerged from its obscurity as a sect, and took its proper place as a herald of the Reformation.

Its position in doctrine was definitely stated by its Council of Elders in 1495, when in answer to the question put by Procop of Neuhaws: "By what is a man justified," it declared itself for the great doctrine of justification by faith, and thus took by right the position it can justly claim for all time of being the first free Evangelical Church of Europe.

For forty years Luke of Prague was the great leader of the Church. He extended its usefulness in every possible way, in the firm conviction, gained by wide experience, that with the exception of one other in the mountains of Savoy, he was the only pure Christian Church on the face of the earth.

While the policy of the Church had been simple, blunt, but it might offer the truth freely to all classes, not satisfy the spiritual cravings of all seeking its fold, its principles of daily living among its members, and its strict organization had not in any way been surrendered. In every detail of their lives, in business, in pleasure, in Christian service, in civil duties, they took the Sermon on the Mount as their guide. The same strict law held good for all,—the child and the old man; the serf and the lord; the candidate and the bishop. Their doctrine shone like a lamp, but the Brethren's Church drew men to it by their lives, their practice and their discipline. The influence of these things extended under Luke's wise direction. He established the ministry on a firmer basis; he enlarged the number of bishops, of whom he became one; he made

Procop of Neuhaus the head of a Council of Elders with extended powers. The Church services were beautified, and the ritual made more tasteful. He gave an impulse to sacred music and singing, and encouraged education and learning in every way. He made use of the new art of printing, publishing a "Catechism for Children," the first Brethren's Hymn Book, "Confessions of Faith," (sending the latter to the King,) and numerous pamphlets, treatises, and portions of the Bible. Between 1505 and 1510 only sixty printed works appeared in Bohemia, but of these fifty were issued by the Brethren's Church.

With such a leader, with a growing and enthusiastic following, making themselves deeply felt upon the spiritual and intellectual heart of the country, and jealously watched by their powerful enemies, the Utraquists and the Roman Catholics, the Brethren could not escape opposition and ultimate persecution. Vile and blasphemous stories were invented to arouse the superstition and hatred of the people, accusing them of secret crimes, sacrilege, poisoning and witchcraft, not to mention other iniquities. These were printed and scattered broadcast by their enemies. But, in 1500, a more powerful enemy took up arms against them. Pope Alexander VI. sent an agent to Bohemia to preach against the Brethren, and the King was stirred up by the wicked rumor that another Ziska would arise in the land from among this hated people, and light again the flames of a religious war. In 1507 he issued the Edict of St. James, forbidding their meetings, requiring their tracts and books to be burnt, and ordering all who refused to join either the Utraquists or the Roman Catholics to be immediately expelled from the country.

Thus began a bitter and merciless persecution, and from 1510 to 1516 was a period full of trial and danger, when the enemies of the Church seemed on every side triumphant. It was only brightened by the light of martyrdom and by the contrast between the faith and courage of its members over against the apparent darkness and hopelessness of the struggle.

Luke of Prague showed himself during these dark years a true and heroic man of God indeed. He hurried in secret from settlement to settlement, he held services in woods and gorges, he cheered the parishes by pastoral letters, he comforted the down-hearted, and spared no effort to reach and influence the mind of the King. At one time he was imprisoned by a robber knight, loaded with chains, and threatened with torture and the stake. Then came a time of rest, which seemed sent by the special act of God. The Brethren's enemies were mysteriously struck down as if by divine retribution. One fell dead in his chair; another was upset in his sleigh, and impaled on his own hunting knife; another was found dead in his cellar, so that it became a common saying among the people: "Let him who is tired of life persecute the Brethren, for he is sure

not to live out the year." To brighten this period the more came news of another ally arisen across the Giant Mountains. Martin Luther had come and nailed his 95 theses against the church door of Wittenberg. They hailed him as a champion sent of God, and at the very first opportunity held out the hand of fellowship, and sent a deputation to visit him ; seeking his advice and opening their hearts to his message of encouragement.

As these bright days dawned, the life of Luke of Prague drew to its close. His period of usefulness had been a long one, he could look upon a work well done, and though he left a Church much weakened by persecution, it had been purified and strengthened by trial, and was well fitted for the coming and wider period of its usefulness. He relinquished his work with reluctance, but still in faith that God would raise up another head to guide his beloved Church in safety through the storms he saw before it. Now, under a man fitted for the stress of those strenuous times, and not alone in its championship of the pure gospel, the Church was to enter upon a broad and useful career.

JOHN AUGUSTA AND HIS TIMES, 1528—1572.

Shortly before the death of Luke of Prague, and while the Brethren's Church was still feebly struggling in the throes of persecution, there began to dawn for Protestantism in Bohemia a wider period of usefulness through the courage and sympathy extended to it by the Reformation movement in Germany. Martin Luther had become the standard bearer of religious freedom in a large field, and his sturdy championship of a pure faith not only thrilled the Brethren with a kindred spirit, but led them to hold out to him as soon as possible the hand of fellowship. Two brethren had been sent as a deputation to visit him ; and that union of effort and of purpose might be more completely realized they presented him with a copy of their Confession of Faith, and their Catechism, seeking his advice on points of doctrine and conduct, and opening their hearts gladly to all that the great Reformer had to say. While the intercourse between the leaders of these two revolts against Romish tyranny had not been altogether free from misunderstanding, it had been the means of a closer acquaintance, and there was infused thereby into the ranks of the Unity a greater enthusiasm and desire to adapt itself more closely in methods and training to the new learning that the Reformation was spreading over Germany.

Luke of Prague, like his predecessor, Gregory, had passed away

when his work was done. He had achieved the task set before him nobly and well, and was the man of God for his day. Now, as a wider path lay before the Brethren, so God again raised up for this work a man equipped and thrilled with the power for his task. Gradually, through influences born of persecution and the newer teachings of the day, there had grown up in the Church a ministry of young men, many of them graduates of the great Wittenberg University, and all gifted with a keen insight into the increasing needs of the Church, and full of an unquenchable eagerness to share in the great victory of Protestantism that seemed so nearly within reach. Of the older leaders of the Church at this time, one of the most open minded was John Horn, the senior bishop of the Executive Council. For eighteen years he had taken part in the government of the Church, ruling faithfully and well, but while realizing the importance of the events of the Reformation, he made no attempt to change the exclusive policy which prevailed during the time of Luke. He was wise enough, however, to see and value the temper and sincerity of the younger party in the Church, and was friendly to it. In 1532, at the Synod held at Brandeis on the Adler, Bishop Skoda resigned the presidency in favor of John Horn, and announced that new elections to fill the vacancies in the Executive Council would take place. Just as the elections were about to begin, a young priest, John Augusta by name, rose and addressed the Synod. He said he spoke in the name of a number of his fellow priests; that he and they were unanimously of the opinion that the Executive Council had become torpid and was an inactive body; that it did not show itself equal to the requirements of the age, and that there must be infused into it a newer and more vigorous element. With an imperturbable self-possession, which struck the older members of the Synod dumb, he proposed himself and four of his friends as candidates for the Council. He and they were elected. But a still greater triumph awaited the bold speaker. He and two of his associates, of like progressive views, were chosen bishops, and immediately consecrated. Bishop Horn being in sympathy with the position of his new colleagues, the *Unitas Fratrum* now assumed a far more conspicuous attitude. From this time forward its history constitutes an important part of Bohemian history in general.

John Augusta was the son of a Hutter, and born in Prague in the year 1500. Originally a member of the Utraquist Church he became dissatisfied, and, in 1524, he joined the Brethren and soon began to prepare for the ministry. In 1529 he was ordained a deacon, and in 1531 advanced to the priesthood. Augusta must be classed among the men born to rule. His energy was boundless, his will indomitable. His persistence, however, often degenerated into obstinacy, and his ambition too often kept his steps from that humility

worthy a follower of the Divine Master. Yet he was a great man, and his work was illustrious. Endowed with natural gifts of an extraordinary character, he became Bohemia's most distinguished preacher, earned the title of the "Bohemian Luther," stood high among many eminent nobles as a trusted counsellor and friend, and labored for the Unity with burning zeal and fiery enthusiasm. His career was a drama, setting forth heroic incidents, tragic scenes, and a lamentable fall. No other bishop of the Brethren was like him in his glory and in his shame.

The first step of the newly organized Council was to draw closer the relations of the Unity with the German Reformer, and to this end a new Confession of Faith was compiled in the same year as the Synod by Horn and Augusta, and presented to Luther. It was a thoroughly Protestant Confession, and while its absolute correctness in point of doctrine gained the approval of Luther and his colleagues, they accorded unqualified admiration to the discipline of the Brethren. "You alone," said Martin Bucer, "combine a wholesome discipline with a pure faith."

But while Augusta thus strengthened the influence of the Church he was not blind to the political issues that threatened it through the growing jealousy and power of its enemies. Lewis of Bohemia had fallen in 1526, in battle with the Turks, and a new king reigned in Prague. He was of the famous Hapsburg family, (from time immemorial Catholic,) Ferdinand the First, King of Hungary, Archduke of Austria, King of the Romans, and brother of the Emperor Charles V. By his election the Bohemian people became entangled in the meshes of European politics, and the safety of their isolation was gone. Already in 1535, Ferdinand began to show an alarming hostility. He summoned members of the Unity to Prague for trial, and cast into prison John the Hermit, a priest of extraordinary influence and piety, and the two young Barons von Janowic, on whose domains he labored, and who refused to surrender him. Although this persecution was as yet a little flame it might at any moment burst into a consuming fire, and John Augusta determined to check it as far as he was able. In conjunction with his fellow bishops and other members of the Council it was determined to present to the King a new Confession of Faith. It was drawn up by Horn and Augusta, and set forth the origin of the *Unitas Fratrum*, and the growth of its faith as shown in its various Confessions. It contained a manly preface by the nobles connected with the Unity, and twenty doctrinal articles, and was signed by twelve barons and thirty-three knights. Baron Conrad Krajek, the richest and most influential member of the Unity, was selected as the most suitable person to secure an audience with the King, and, on the 11th of November, 1535, he was granted an interview. His reception was at first not propitious, but, three days later the depu-

tation formally presented the Confession, and Ferdinand received them with royal graciousness, and promised to leave the Brethren in peace provided they proved themselves true and faithful subjects.

For a while there was a lull in the storm. Peace and plenty reigned in the land, and the Brethren extended the borders of the Church on every side. Scattered throughout the country were 400 places of worship, with 200,000 members; and famous schools, patronized by the leading nobility of the kingdom, perpetuated the teachings and enhanced the influence of the Unity. The greatest nobles of Bohemia belonged to the Church, while the people loved it, and it looked as if it might some day become the national Church of Bohemia. Yet bitter hatred was being nursed in the ranks of the Utraquists, and time and again charges were being brought against the Brethren. Twice in the Diet, the King was induced to order the arrest of John Augusta, but the danger passed, and the days of the Unity were bright for a time longer. Then fell the darkness and terror of a great tempest.

The Smalcald League of Protestant German princes, headed by John, Elector of Saxony, was arrayed against the Emperor Charles V., and Ferdinand, King of Bohemia, called together his loyal subjects to take up arms and fight with him for his brother and his cause. Now the Protestant nobles of Bohemia were in a quandary, and must choose between loyalty to their sovereign or their faith. Their choice was made at a great meeting held at the house of Baron Kotska, a member of the Unity, and a Bohemian League, composed largely of nobles from the Utraquist and Brethren's Churches, was formed, which made an effort to send troops in support of the Elector of Saxony. Before they could join the Protestant forces the battle of Muehlberg was fought, the Emperor was triumphant, and King Ferdinand returned to Prague to wreak vengeance on his enemies. The grand opportunity for which he was waiting had come, and John Augusta and the Brethren's Church, against whom his hatred was most directed, were to feel the full weight of a bigoted tyrant's wrath.

There was no dallying in the King's plans. On the 22d of August, 1547, four nobles, one of them a member of the Brethren's Church, were executed. Others were robbed or banished to certain towns or castles for life. Churches were closed and worship forbidden; ministers and people fled into the mountains and woods; and all the cities that had been the chief seats of the Brethren fell into the relentless hands of the King. As a final climax to his vengeance a royal mandate was issued to the effect that the Brethren must either join the Roman Catholic Church or leave the country forever within six weeks.

One of the most fascinating chapters in the history of the Unity followed this edict. To the surprise of their enemies the Brethren

chose the alternative of banishment rather than apostasy. By hundreds and by thousands, along all the main roads leading out of the country into Poland, in caravans, with wagons for the women and children and weaker ones, they marched to their exile with songs, as in a triumphal procession. Everywhere the people welcomed them and entertained them, mayors and town councils turning out in their honor, and guards of foot soldiers and horsemen escorting them on the way. But many a weary day passed before they found rest for their feet. Turned from Great Poland they sought Polish Prussia, and were again ordered away ; only after six months of weary wandering did they find a hearth and home at Königsberg, in East Prussia, among their brethren of the Lutheran Church. Ferdinand knew not what impulse he had set in motion. The exodus from Bohemia, led by men like George Israel, not only established the Brethren's Church in Prussia, but through the fiery zeal of himself and others, in seven years, built it up in Poland, with Ostrorog as its center, and many noble families to support it. Forty congregations were established, and an influence was attained that finally, at the great Synod of Sandomir, succeeded in uniting into one Confession all the Protestants of the land of their adoption.

Meanwhile the fires of persecution were flaming out more fiercely in Bohemia, and Augusta, with his fellow bishops and members of the Council were compelled to seek concealment. Bishop Horn had died, and Augusta, succeeding him as President of the Council, spared not himself on behalf of his Church and stricken people. His energetic character expanded in proportion to the perils that surrounded him. In the name of the entire Church he sent a letter to the King, beseeching him to spare the Unity, which was innocent and had not conspired against him. The only reply was the declaration of Ferdinand's unalterable determination to adhere to his royal mandate, and his messenger, John George, was arrested at Prague, imprisoned, narrowly escaping the rack, and only set at liberty at last on condition that he leave the country. A second royal edict appeared against the Brethren, commanding the first to be strictly enforced, and ordering the arrest and imprisonment at Prague of every minister of the Unity.

There was none whom the King more eagerly longed to get within his power than John Augusta. He had come to regard him almost as a personal enemy, because of his fearless efforts on behalf of his people, and it was well known that a liberal reward would be paid for his arrest and capture. This set his emissaries constantly on the watch, and at last, by craft that was almost satanic, they succeeded in their purpose. On the plea that the advice of a faithful minister was needed he was lured into an ambush, and, with his friend, Jacob Bilek, was seized by three armed ruffians, and borne off in triumph. Both were immediately taken to Prague, and lodged

in prison, Augusta being confined in the famous White Tower. He was placed in a dungeon, and fetters were fastened to his hands and to his feet. He was urged to betray the hiding-place of his brethren and to confess the treasonable designs of which he and his colleagues had been suspected. When he refused tortures were inflicted such as only the bigotry of a cruel tyrant and his creatures could devise. Like a hero he refused to betray his trust or prove unfaithful to his people. When his agonies were at their height he was asked what his brethren were doing : " They are seeking refuge with one accord in impassioned prayer to God !" was his illustrious answer. At last, the King, angered by the obduracy of his victim, himself recommended new methods of torture, but before his messenger arrived Augusta and his friend, Bilek, who had been even more cruelly treated, found a new place of imprisonment in the old and isolated castle of Purglitz.

Here, for 16 years, with only a short interval again in the White Tower, Augusta languished in imprisonment. At times it was lightened in its rigor, and he was visited secretly by friends, and was able to open up a regular correspondence with the rest of the Brethren in Bohemia, which was maintained steadily throughout the whole imprisonment. From the four walls of his gloomy dungeon he still continued to wield the sceptre of his power. He wrote sermons and homilies for his persecuted people ; he gave advice in times of difficulty and danger ; and composed many hymns.

But persecution, though long and leaving a track of terror and hardships, at last slackened, and the Brethren's Church in Bohemia began to recover from the blow. It is true many of its members had been compelled to leave their native land, but many, too, had remained, bending but unyielding till the great storm should blow over.

The change came through political issues. In 1556, Ferdinand, through the resignation of his brother, Charles V., became Emperor, and was succeeded as King of Bohemia by his son, Maximilian, a man well inclined to the Protestant cause. The Brethren saw their opportunity, and sought the favor of the new monarch. Times had changed, their enemies were weakened, or had tired of persecution and hatred that had failed in its object, and a period of rest and growth began. They presented a copy of their hymn book to the King ; rebuilt their chapel at Jungbunzlau, other congregations following their example, and by 1557, — a hundred years after the settlement of Kunwald, — the Church of the Brethren was firmly established and divided into three provinces, Bohemia, Moravia and Poland.

The bright light of a new growth and strength shone upon the figure of the once great leader of the Church, but he was no longer honored with the trust and confidence that had so long been unre-

servedly given him. John Augusta in his prison failed to realize that even in persecution men grow and develop. Outside the four walls of his dungeon times were rapidly changing and men needed leaders who could study events and act quickly. As president of the Executive Council he had long been the autocrat, and his courage and heroism had fixed firmly his hold upon the Church's loyalty and devotion, but the Church was often in perplexity, and needed one in its midst to whom the government could be entrusted. After much hesitation, and repeated refusals on his part to consent to an election of new bishops, the Council, at a period when Augusta's fate was most doubtful, determined at last to take its own course. New bishops were elected, and the Council appointed from those chosen John Czerny, First Senior in Bohemia and Moravia, and George Israel to the same post in Poland. When, by chance, the news reached Augusta long after the event itself, he was filled with rage and indignation, and, in repeated letters, declared the action of the Council illegal. That body, though it had not acted in an open and upright manner by concealing from him the new appointments, justified itself by an appeal to the constitution of the Unity, and thenceforth began the eclipse and downfall of the great leader of the Church. It is sad to note how disappointed ambition and wounded pride beclouded his judgment, and led him farther yet from his brethren. While he may have been thoroughly honest in his hope that a National Church could be erected by a union of the discordant Protestant elements of the country, his co-operation with the Utraquists and Jesuits to secure his liberty, though in furtherance of his great scheme, was a sacrifice of principle, and justly forfeited the confidence of the leaders of the Unity. When finally he became a member of the Utraquist Church, and declared his belief that salvation could not be found outside that body, the Council took action, excluding him from the *Unitas Fratrum* and depriving him of all ministerial and episcopal functions.

At last, in 1564, his release from prison came. It was a pathetic, broken figure that issued from his cell, speaking of a heroism and endurance for conscience' sake hardly ever equalled, but the glory of his closing years was obscured by the cloud that never completely lifted. He was reconciled again to his brethren, and confirmed their acts, but never could regain the confidence of former days. He was a great and good man, though an erring one. In all the subsequent history of the Church, his equal cannot be found. We mourn over his faults, we bring a tribute to the greatness of his works, to his heroism as a confessor, and to the zeal, endurance and high aims he infused into the Unity.

PROSPERITY AND DEFEAT, 1572—1621.

With John Angusta the last great bishop of the Ancient Unitas Fratrum passed away. Good men and true followed him in the episcopal office, but none who were such leaders as he had been. Still the Unity continued to grow and increase in influence in spite of several outbreaks of persecution, instigated by the Jesuits. The Jesuits were a Roman Catholic Order, established in 1534, consisting of both priests and laymen. From the first they showed a burning zeal in promoting the growth of the Catholic Church through any and all means; by 1600 they had secured a firm foothold in Bohemia, and from then on they were the tireless enemies of all Protestants, and especially of the Brethren.

But for a time the Protestant cause was too strong for them. Only a few Utraquists were left, while many of the people had become Lutherans, and still larger numbers belonged to the Unitas Fratrum, which labored with unabated vigor. Synods were held, young men were educated for the ministry, and the greatest literary work of the Unity was given to the world. This was the Kralitz Bible, so called because it was printed at Kralitz. It was the first translation of the entire Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into the Bohemian language, and a commission of eight trained men spent fourteen years in its preparation. It was in six volumes, the first being printed in 1579, the last in 1593. Even a Jesuit, writing in 1668, said of it that "that its style deserved to be praised above all measure," and it has furnished, word for word, the text of the Bohemian Bible published by the British and Foreign Bible Society of to-day.

Shortly after the printing of the Kralitz Bible two new leaders came to the front in the Unitas Fratrum. They were not bishops, but noblemen, for during the last few years the nobles in the Unity had been steadily gaining in influence. It was they who gave the Brethren protection against persecution, who acted as mediators between the Unity and the State, who supplied land for the churches, and money for the support of the ministry. They were enthusiastic, God-fearing men, who loved the Unity and gave themselves freely in its behalf, so it was natural that leadership should now fall into their hands. Chief among them were Wenzel von Budowa of Bohemia, and Charles von Zerotin of Moravia, and under them the Unitas Fratrum entered a new period of its history, glorious, though brief. The ministers of the Unity were the most highly educated in the country, and in every village there was a parish school, so that the Brethren had the honor of making the Bohemians the best educated people of their time. Along with culture went comfort and plenty hand in hand, and great men often came from afar to see the famed settlements of the Brethren. In sacred

music the *Unitas Fratrum* also took the lead. It was the first Protestant Church to issue a Hymn-book, and eight editions had now been published. The words of the hymns breathed devotion and brotherly love, the melodies were sweeping and strong. They were sung in cottage and in castle, and in an age when congregational singing was little known, the Brethren, Sunday by Sunday, praised God with united voices.

And yet, the *Unitas Fratrum* was still under the ban of the law, old edicts against them were still unrepealed, and there was a constant danger that something might give the King and the Jesuits a chance to begin another persecution. Indeed, an attempt was made in 1602, though it was unsuccessful, and only brought the *Unitas Fratrum* and the Lutheran Church more closely together.

In 1608 the great opportunity of the Protestants came, and their nobles were quick to take advantage of it. Rudolph was a very weak king, and his people and his own relatives turned against him. Hungary, Austria and Moravia revolted, and, with an army advancing against Prague, Rudolph called upon the Bohemians to defend him. Then the Protestant nobles, led by Budowa, took a decided stand, and refused their help unless he would sign a charter giving full religious liberty to Bohemia and Moravia, and revoking all edicts against the Protestants. Rudolph twisted and squirmed, made promises and broke them, as the nobles and the Jesuits by turns pressed on him, but finally the nobles conquered, and, on the 9th of July, the King signed the Bohemian Charter, which granted all that the nobles had asked.

When this was announced in Prague the people could hardly contain themselves for joy, and throughout all Bohemia the Charter was hailed as the final cure for all religious ills. There was a "Board of Twenty-four Defenders," whose duty it was to see that the terms of the Charter were observed. The Word of God was preached in 500 churches. The Bible was a free book, and Budowa was regarded as a national hero. The Brethren had at last won their freedom, and as they had eight representatives on the Board of Defenders, they willingly subscribed to the general Bohemian National Protestant Confession; and with their own ritual and their own government recognized by law, they could henceforth preach and teach in their own way without fear of sword and stake.

This prosperity, however, did not last long. Already in 1611 complaints began to reach the Defenders that the Catholics were growing unfriendly, a significant sign, as since the signing of the Bohemian Charter they had been outwardly on good terms with the Protestants. This renewed opposition was fully revealed in the Church Building difficulty. To explain fully: one clause in the Bohemian Charter was not quite clear, and the Jesuits twisted it to suit their own purposes. According to that clause there was to be

complete religious freedom on all "Royal Estates." The question arose: "What were 'Royal Estates?'" Were Church Estates—estates held by the Church of Rome as a tenant of the King—"Royal Estates," or were they not? When the Charter was granted it was commonly understood that they were, and, acting on this understanding, the Protestants had built churches on two Church Estates. The Jesuits, backed by Martinic and Slawata, argued that all Church Estates were the sole property of the Church of Rome, and so they came and demolished the churches, and used the wood of one for firewood.

The Protestant nobles appealed to the Emperor, but to their great dismay he upheld the Jesuits, despite the fact that the nobles had given him his throne.

In 1616, as if conscious of a coming storm, the Brethren met at Zerawic for what proved to be the last United Synod of the Ancient Unitas Fratrum, and there drew up an invaluable document. It was a full account of the institutions of the Unity, and was called the "Ratio Disciplinæ" or "Order of Discipline," and it remains to this day the best picture of the life of the Ancient Brethren.

In 1617 Ferdinand II. became King of Bohemia. When he took the oath, at his coronation, to keep the Charter, all knew the proceeding was a farce. He was half Jesuit, and it was said that he had secretly sworn not to grant anything to the Protestants that would be against the Catholics. In every Romish church in Bohemia, the priests preached sermons against the Protestants. The King's government, led by Martinic and Slawata, openly broke the Charter. Protestant ministers were expelled from their pulpits, and Roman Catholics put in their places. The King's officers burst into Protestant churches and interrupted the services. It seemed evident that trouble was brewing. On Oct. 31st, 1617, the Protestants held a grand Centenary Festival in honor of Martin Luther, which enraged the Catholics, and on Nov. 10th the Catholics held a Festival which maddened the Protestants. The Jesuits never tired of stirring up strife between the parties, and abuses of every kind were heaped upon the Protestants until the Charter had been violated in almost every particular. Appeal after appeal to the King and Emperor was met with harshness and scorn, until it seemed that now was the time for the Twenty-four Defenders to rise and do their duty,—now was the time to make the Charter no longer a mockery. The Defenders came to the royal castle in Prague,—the same in which John Augusta had lain for 16 years,—they burst into the room where four of the King's Regents were assembled, among them Martinic and Slawata! As the Defenders stood in the presence of the two men who had done most to bring affliction upon the people they felt the decisive moment had come. The interview was stormy. Paul von Rican, as spokesman, read a document, charging

Martinic and Slawata with breaking the Charter, and appealed to the crowd which had gathered in the corridor. They shouted, and one voice was heard to say, "Into the Black Tower with them." But another, Rupow by name, said, "Out of the window with them, after the ancient Bohemian fashion." No sooner said than done. The two men were seized and thrown out of the window, sixty feet from the ground, and, falling upon a heap of rubbish, they escaped with nothing worse than a few cuts and bruises, and a report spread that the Virgin Mary had stretched out her hands to save them.

The events now came thick and fast, like hailstones in a storm. The Defenders took measures at once, gathered an army, deposed Ferdinand, and elected Frederick, the Elector Palatine, and a son-in-law of James I. of England, as King of Bohemia; and ordered the Jesuits out of the realm. There was a scene in Prague when the Jesuits departed. They formed in procession in the streets, and, clad in black, marched off with bowed heads and loud wailing. For a moment the Protestants of Prague went mad with joy. In the great Cathedral they pulled off the ornaments and destroyed costly pictures, and the new King conducted a mock celebration of the Holy Communion. What a fever men's minds must have been in when such sacrilege could be committed!

Then the army of King Ferdinand marched toward Prague, and the battle of the White Mountain was fought, Nov. 8, 1620. The army of the Defenders was routed, churches were destroyed, villages were pillaged, ministers of the Gospel were murdered, and Bohemia lay crushed under the heel of the conqueror.

As the members of the *Unitas Fratrum* had led in the demand for religious liberty, and, when it was attained, had joined hands with the other Protestants, and had shared with them in the frenzied attempt to hold their rights by force of arms, so now they shared in the great defeat, suffering more heavily than any others from the measures that followed it.

The Jesuits were recalled; priests of the Unity and Lutheran ministers were ordered to leave Prague in three days and Bohemia in eight. The Defenders and other leaders were left at large for three months, then when they thought the danger was over they were summoned before the Governor "to hear a communication from the Emperor." It was only a ruse, and they were all arrested and imprisoned, and tried on various charges. Twenty-seven were condemned to death, the rest to other punishments. June 21, 1621, was appointed for their execution, which took place in the Great Square of Prague.

On the west side of this square was the Council House, and in this were the prisoners, half of whom were members of the *Unitas Fratrum*. In front of their window was the scaffold, draped in black. When, early in the morning, the prisoners looked out of the

window, to take their last view of earth, they saw a brilliant, gorgeous, but to them, terrible scene. There was prayer in that martyrs' room. There was the last earthly communion with the Eternal. Not one of their number showed the white feather in the presence of death. Swiftly and in order the work was done. One man, named Mydlar, was the executioner, and, being a Protestant, he performed his duties with as much decency and humanity as possible. The sword which was used for the first eleven victims is still to be seen in Prague, with the names inscribed upon it, and among them is the name of Wenzel von Budowa. Had the Protestants conquered, Budowa and his associates would rank in history along with Washington and other heroes, and, though they failed and perished, their testimony to Christian patriotism and evangelical religion and personal faith is immortal.

THE BRETHREN IN EXILE, 1621—1722.

After executing the Defenders of Bohemia, the King and his servants left not a stone unturned to destroy the Protestants. Their churches were either destroyed, or turned into Roman Catholic chapels by customary methods of purification and re-dedication. What actually happened during the next few years no tongue can tell. We read that thirty-six thousand families left Bohemia and Moravia rather than endure the persecutions inflicted on all Protestants.

There were several distinct features of this anti-reformation, besides the general oppression of the people. First came the seizure of the church buildings; then Protestant clergymen were everywhere driven from their parishes; Protestant literature was, as far as possible, destroyed, the Kralitz Bible being particularly sought out; a wholesale confiscation of property took place; the currency was intentionally depreciated, so that multitudes were reduced to poverty; commissions were sent through the country to bring the people into the Roman Catholic Church; all those who refused to become Catholics were banished.

The members of the *Unitas Fratrum* suffered with the rest. Their priests tried bravely to remain in the country to comfort their people, Charles von Zerotin and others used all their power and influence to protect their Brethren, but it was in vain, and, in 1627, Zerotin and those he had sheltered went into exile,—a type of thousands of the best and bravest of the Brethren.

Driven from Bohemia and Moravia the Brethren held together

as far as possible, and went to countries where they hoped to re-establish their Church,—to Poland, Hungary, Transylvania, Prussia and Silesia. Of these settlements the more important were in Poland, to which country many of the Brethren had gone in earlier persecutions. The Polish branch of the Unity had also suffered severely from the Jesuits, but, in spite of opposition, Lissa now became the centre of the Unity's work. There the printing press was again set in motion, there Synods met, and from there the bishops and their assistants did what they could to relieve the necessities of the exiles, many of whom were in deepest poverty.

The most prominent figure during these years was John Amos Comenius. His story is very interesting, but can be given here only in outline. Born in 1592 in Moravia, he received a good education, and began his career as Rector of the school at Prerau. He was pastor at Fulneck in 1620, when the town was sacked, and his library was burned on the public square. With a company of friends he went into exile, in 1628, pausing on the frontier mountain-top to look back to the home-land, and offer an impassioned prayer that God would preserve therein "a seed of righteousness." In 1632, he was consecrated a bishop of the *Unitas Fratrum*. His life-work had two distinct aspects. As a member of the *Unitas Fratrum* he gave to it whole-hearted devotion. He collected funds for the needy; he republished the Kralitz Bible, the *Ratio Disciplina*, the Hymn-books and Confessions of the Brethren; he led in the government of the scattered congregations; he impressed upon his people the necessity for maintaining a succession of bishops, that they might be ready, if God pleased, to renew the *Unitas Fratrum*. In addition to all this he was one of the greatest educators the world has ever known, the founder of the modern theory of education. He was honored in England, in Sweden, in Holland, was even invited to come to America as president of Harvard College. His literary activity never flagged, and his fame to-day is even greater than when he lived. He died in 1670.

Meanwhile the exiles continued to suffer change. Periods of comparative peace would be followed by war and its desolation. Lissa was twice destroyed by fire and twice rebuilt, but the Brethren slowly turned to the Reformed Church (Calvinistic), and were finally absorbed by it. Certain congregations, however, still cherished their descent from the *Unitas Fratrum*, and maintained that line of bishops until 1841, when it was broken by death. Since then it has been thrice revived through the Renewed *Unitas Fratrum*. In the same way the congregations scattered in other countries were absorbed by other Churches, but details of the change are wanting.

THE "HIDDEN SEED," 1621—1722.

In the period from the anti-reformation to 1722 a "Hidden Seed" of the *Unitas Fratrum* remained in Bohemia and Moravia. This seed consisted of such Brethren as for various reasons did not emigrate. The rulers sought to suppress every vestige of Evangelical religion, forbidding even family worship in such houses as were suspected of Evangelical tendencies, and allowing no Protestant to settle and acquire property in any part of Bohemia and Moravia. Nevertheless, in secret, especially among the peasantry, the faith of the Brethren was maintained, and both the government and the Romish clergy found it impossible to extinguish absolutely the spark which still glowed.

A detailed history of the "Hidden Seed" for the first fifty years cannot be given; all that can be said is that religious worship was kept up, as far as possible, by stealth, sometimes in the cottages of the peasants or castles of lords, and sometimes in the recesses of forests or mountains. During this time the Brethren were visited by ministers of their Church from Silesia and Hungary, who dispensed the sacraments. Comenius, too, did what he could to foster the "Hidden Seed" by secretly sending to Bohemia and Moravia copies of the Bible, Catechism, Hymnal, and works relating to the *Unitas Fratrum*.

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the "Hidden Seed," both in Bohemia and Moravia, showed signs of new life. Such life can now be traced back to several sources. It flowed, in the first place, from the Evangelical literature which began to spread in richer streams than at any previous time since the Anti-Reformation.

Wenzel Kleych, who was born in 1678, was one who did much to awaken the "Hidden Seed." He read everything he could find on the subject of the Brethren's Church. This brought on him severe persecution, and he resolved to seek a country where he could breathe the atmosphere of religious liberty, and follow his literary inclinations in peace. He and his wife, with their two children, forsaking their rich farm, left by night, and made their way to Zittau, in Saxony. They eked out an existence by gardening, spinning and washing. In time they became more prosperous, and Kleych was able to have printed a new edition of the Bohemian New Testament, and much other religious literature, which he sent by night across the frontier to Bohemia and Moravia.

The testimony borne by the fathers of a former generation was another source of new life, and these men prophesied of the renewal of the Brethren's Church, thus encouraging the younger generation.

Christian David, "the servant of the Lord," was born on the

last day of the year 1690. He was an ignorant shepherd, entangled in all the superstitions of Rome, but was, through the Son, made free indeed, and enlightened by the Holy Ghost, he was inspired to work for Christ with a zeal which nothing could quench. In 1713, after learning the trade of a carpenter, he left Moravia, looking for work as a journeyman, and seeking Christ as an awakened sinner. He visited Hungary, Austria and other places; joined the Protestant Church; served as a soldier in the Prussian army; lay sick unto death in a hospital; escaped from the hands of the Jesuits—all the time growing in grace and in the knowledge of God,—and, at last, in 1717, he came to Goerlitz, in Silesia, where he met with Melchoir Schaefer, the pastor of a Lutheran church, and other men of sterling piety. He determined to make that place his home but was soon moved by the Spirit to visit his native country in order to proclaim the Gospel.

In the course of his journey he came to Sehlen, and formed the acquaintance of the Neissers, upon whose heart he made a deep impression. On his return to Goerlitz he was seized with a severe illness, and again brought to death's door. No sooner had he recovered than he set out again and proceeded to Sehlen, where he proclaimed Christ with great power. His exposition of Christ's words, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life," moved the Neissers to their inmost hearts. They begged Christian David to look for a retreat in a Protestant country, where they could worship God in spirit and in truth. He consented to do so, but three years elapsed before a place was found. On Monday, in Whitsunweek, the 25th of May, 1722, Christian David arrived at Sehlen with the intelligence that Count Nicholas Lewis von Zinzendorf, a pious young nobleman, was willing to receive them on his estate of Berthelsdorf, in Saxony. In the night of the following Wednesday, soon after 10 o'clock, Augustine and Jacob Neisser, their wives and four children, together with Michael Jaeschke and Martha Neisser, ten persons in all, leaving behind houses and farms and whatever else they possessed, took their silent way afoot through the village, and, led by Christian David, turned toward the Silesian frontier. They were the first of those witnesses that had been ordained to go into a strange land, and build unto God a city, at whose sacred fire the dying *Unitas Fratrum* should renew its youth like the eagle's.

LEADING QUESTIONS.

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

Who founded the Christian Church? From what Church were its earliest members drawn? Give three foundation principles. When and why were the Gentiles admitted? Why were the Christians persecuted by the Jews; and what was the result? Why by the Romans; and what result? Describe the organization of the Church in this period. How much of the Bible did Christians have by the close of the first century?

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Explain the compilation of the New Testament. What disturbed the Church during the 2d and 3d centuries? What is "heresy"? What does the term "Catholic Church" mean? To what extent were Christians persecuted during this period? Describe the catacombs. When did persecution end? Name the principal Church Fathers of the 2d century; of the 3rd century; of the 4th and 5th centuries.

THE ROMAN AND THE GREEK CHURCHES.

What was the condition of the Church under Constantine; Constantius; Julian? Describe the barbaric incursions into the Roman Empire. When was the Empire divided? Explain the growth of the Church during this period? What is the Greek Church? The Roman Church? What marked the alliance between Church and State?

CHRISTIANITY IN BOHEMIA.

Why is Bohemia important in general Church history? Describe it, and give early history. When and how was Christianity introduced from the Roman Church? From the Greek Church? How did the Roman Catholics gain control, and with what result? Describe the Bohemian awakening in the 14th century. Give the three forerunners of Huss.

HUSS AND THE HUSSITES.

Give outline of Huss' life. What did he teach? Why was he put to death? Describe his trial and execution. What were the Hussite Wars? Who was Ziska? What did the Utraquists want? The Taborites? Which gained control? Who was Rokycana? Peter of Chelcic?

RISE OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM.

Who was Gregory the Patriarch? Describe the settlement at Kunwald; the organization of the Unitas Fratrum. Explain the first persecution of the Unity. When and why did they establish a separate ministry? Explain the two steps in their ordination. What was the result?

THE UNITAS FRATRUM UNDER LUKE OF PRAGUE.

Who followed Gregory in the leadership of the Unitas Fratrum? Describe the Unity during this period,—its size, position in the State, doctrine, publications. What was the Edict of St. James? What followed it? Give the life of Luke of Prague.

JOHN AUGUSTA AND HIS TIMES.

What intercourse did the Unitas Fratrum have with Martin Luther? Who was John Augusta, and how did he become a member of the Council? How did he try to guard the Unity against the Roman Catholics? How did the Unity now stand in Bohemia? What gave opportunity for the fourth persecution? Describe the exodus into Poland and Prussia, and its result. Tell of the capture, torture and heroism of Augusta. Describe the recovery of the Unity from this persecution. Tell of the last days of John Augusta.

PROSPERITY AND DEFEAT.

Who were the Jesuits? What was the Kralitz Bible? Why did the nobles become leaders in the Unitas Fratrum? Name two. Who published the first Protestant Hymnbook? What was the Bohemian Charter? What was its effect on the Unitas Fratrum? How long did peace last? What was the Ratio Disciplinae? Describe the Protestant revolt and success; the Protestant defeat, and the "Day of Blood" at Prague. What did this mean to the Protestants of Bohemia and Moravia?

THE BRETHREN IN EXILE.

Describe the anti-reformation in Bohemia and Moravia. What happened to the Unitas Fratrum? Where did they establish a new centre? Give the story of John Amos Comenius. What became of the exiled congregations?

THE "HIDDEN SEED."

What was the "Hidden Seed"? How was the faith kept alive? Who was Wenzel Kleych, and what did he do for them? Tell the story of Christian David? Who were the first of the "Hidden Seed" to emigrate from Moravia in 1722, and why did they go?

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